

Dennis Chavez fought for the underdog because he was an underdog. Born into poverty in Valencia County, NM, when the State was still part of Mexico, Chavez walked a long and difficult road to the pinnacle of political power. A child of an isolated small town, he would see the world and help to shape it. A high school dropout, he earned a law degree and became a lawmaker. A victim of ethnic discrimination, he wrote legislation that would eventually make employment discrimination illegal and then unthinkable.

Ambassador Ed Romero also has been an underdog. Those who know him as an international businessman might be surprised to know he started his career working in the fields. Ed Romero had to fight for his business successes. And he fought for the political power that he has used to make this world a better place.

If Ed Romero had just one career, he would be impressive.

If he had only risen from poverty to become a successful businessman—sought-after for corporate boards and respected by his colleagues around the world—that would be an achievement.

But Ed Romero also has devoted his life to sharing what he has earned. As an activist, he has spent his time helping other underdogs play an active role in their government. He has helped America work with its allies to promote peace and human rights across the world. And, much like Senator Chavez before him, he has worked to ensure that men and women of color are represented in this country's corridors of power.

Ed Romero has shown leadership at home and abroad. He is a founder of the Hispanic Cultural Foundation and the National Hispanic Cultural Center in New Mexico. He cofounded the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute executive board. He has served as a delegate to the Helsinki accords, and we are very proud that President Clinton named him U.S. Ambassador to Spain.

Linking these two great New Mexicans is very appropriate. Each man turned his own personal struggle into a lasting compassion for life's victims. Both men fought for their people—and for every people that have tasted the bitter fruit of injustice. Both men make me proud to be a New Mexican.

Men like Ed Romero keep America true to its ideals. New Mexico is proud to call him a native son. And I am proud to call him a friend. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ambassador Ed Romero on receiving the Senator Dennis Chavez Civil Rights and Leadership Award.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HARKIN, from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, without amendment:

S. Res. 51. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. LINCOLN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 451. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of the establishment of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 452. A bill to ensure public access to Federal land and to the airspace over Federal land; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 453. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to make grants and offer technical assistance to local governments and others to design and implement innovative policies, programs, and projects that address widespread property vacancy and abandonment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 454. A bill to improve the organization and procedures of the Department of Defense for the acquisition of major weapon systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 455. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of 5 United States Army Five-Star Generals, George Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower, Henry "Hap" Arnold, and Omar Bradley, alumni of the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to coincide with the celebration of the 132nd Anniversary of the founding of the United States Army Command and General Staff College; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 456. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation

with the Secretary of Education, to develop guidelines to be used on a voluntary basis to develop plans to manage the risk of food allergy and anaphylaxis in schools and early childhood education programs, to establish school-based food allergy management grants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. HARKIN:

S. Res. 51. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 52. A resolution designating March 2, 2009, as "Read Across America Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 132

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 132, a bill to increase and enhance law enforcement resources committed to investigation and prosecution of violent gangs, to deter and punish violent gang crime, to protect law-abiding citizens and communities from violent criminals, to revise and enhance criminal penalties for violent crimes, to expand and improve gang prevention programs, and for other purposes.

S. 160

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 160, a bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 160, *supra*.

S. 205

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 205, a bill to authorize additional resources to identify and eliminate illicit sources of firearms smuggled into Mexico for use by violent drug trafficking organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 213

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 213, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure air passengers have access to necessary services while on a grounded air carrier, and for other purposes.

S. 256

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 256, a bill to enhance the ability to combat methamphetamine.